## Abstract

A system and method for implementing a control channel
in a packet switched communications network. In a
computer network, such as a local area network  (LAN)
it is known to utilize the Ethernet for distributing
communications between stations. The Ethernet employs
a standard frame format that includes header frames
and, in particular a preamble frame which may be used
to provide synchronization information between
switching devices or nodes. The preamble frame is not
required in a Gigabit Ethernet implementation and the
present invention employs a portion of the preamble
frame to implement a control channel between switching
devices.